

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Replacement sheet 1 containing Figs. 1A and 1B and Fig. 2 are submitted
herewith.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-5, 7, 14 and 15 stand in the present application, claims 6 and 8-13 having been withdrawn from consideration unless a generic claim is allowed. Independent claims 1 and 15 have been amended. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to the drawings and the specification for a number of deficiencies. As noted above, Applicants have amended Figs. 1A and 1B and the specification in order to correct all of the deficiencies pointed out by the Examiner. Accordingly, the Examiner's objections to the drawings and specification are believed to have been overcome.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-5, 7, 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Miyazaki et al., has rejected claims 1-4, 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent Abstract of Fujikura (JP 50145026), and has rejected claims 1-4 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Griffioen et al. Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's § 102 rejections of the claims.

The present application relates to removing or installing cabling in ducts. In practice, this can be problematic since ducts often contain a number of cables, and the cables are often intertwined within the duct. The huge cost of providing new ducts means that it is commercially important to be able to remove redundant cables which are no longer used, to free up duct space for re-use. This is a problem as the

intertwined cables are often jammed within the duct, and forcible removal by pulling may damage the other cables still in use, as well as the duct itself.

Applicants' invention provides an apparatus and technique to form a path through the duct, by sleeving a subduct over the redundant cable and easing jammed cables away from the redundant cable using force or compressed air which activates a path-finding head located at the leading end of the subduct. After the redundant cable has been isolated from the other cables twining around it, it may then be removed by pulling it out of the duct.

To more clearly patentably define Applicants' invention, independent claims 1 and 15 have been amended to require that the path finding element negotiates a path through an obstruction in the duct. Since none of the cited references teach or suggest such a path finding element the present claims patentably define over the cited references.

The elements which the Examiner has found to be equivalent to the claimed path-finding head in all three cited documents Miyazaki (US 5108228), Fujikura (JP 5015026) and Griffioen (US 5639183) are not arranged to perform the same function as the path-finding element of the present application, which is to negotiate a path through the obstruction in the duct. See present specification at page 4, lines 3-6.

More particularly in Miyazaki, the plug's primary function is to allow heat and pressure to escape via the bores of the plug after the liner has been installed in the tube. The Fujikura traveling device seems to be means to pull the "slender mover" through a conduit line. In both Miyazaki and Fujikura, the tube and the conduit line are free from obstacles. It is not clear what the Examiner means to refer to in Figure 4 of

Griffioen which is directed to finding a way to sleeve a tubular cable-duct over a directly-buried cable, by means of using a liquid to soften and flush away the earth at the leading end of the cable-duct to obtain its advancement along the length of the buried cable. In this case, it may be possible to say that the ground itself is an obstacle, but this is also not an obstacle within the duct. Furthermore, there is no disclosure or suggestion that the cable-duct is inserted into a (bigger) duct, since this is case related to direct-buried cables.

Accordingly, amended independent claims 1 and 15 and their respective dependent claims are believed to patentably define over the cited references.


Therefore, in view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully requested that the application be reconsidered and that all of claims 1-5, 7, 14 and 15 (as well as claims 6 and 8-13), standing in the application, be allowed and that the case be passed to issue. If there are any other issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through either a supplemental response or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone exchange indicated below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____


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